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AUTHOR Knowles, Malcolm S.
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ABSTRACT

Some of the criticisms that have been leveled at the educational establishment by social analysts are discussed. It is suggested that one of the new realities is that education must be a lifelong process in order to avoid the catastrophe of human obsolescence. The assumptions and elements for a new model of education as a lifelong process are discussed. Based on the assumption that the purpose of education is the development of competencies for performing the various roles required in human life, the first element in a new educational model would be a taxonomy of these roles and their required competencies. From the second assumption--the primary purpose of schooling is to help children and youth learn learning skills--seven elements of learning skills are listed. Assumption 3 is based on a spiral of "learning projects," where the school is presented to learners as a "learning resource center" and teachers are presented as "learning project consultants." Also, included in this report is an outline of life problems of American adults noting such areas as vocation and career, home and family living, personal development, etc., as well as a bibliography of the author's publications. (JS)

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TOWARD A MODEL OF LIFELONG EDUCATION

Malcolm S. Knowles
Boston University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
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Alfred North Whitehead presented the insight about two generations ago that the reversal of the relationship between two basic dymanics of civilization in this century has required the redefinition of the purpose of education. Throughout history, until the first quarter of the 20th century, the lifespan of an individual was greater than the timespan of of major cultural change. Under this condition it was appropriate to define education as a process of transmittal of what is known--of transmitting the culture. It was also appropriate to define the role of the teacher as that of transmitter of information and to regard education as an agency for youth.

But, Whitehead pointed out in a commencement address at Harvard University in 1930, "We are living in the first period of human history for which this assumption is false . . . today this time-span is considerably shorter than that of human life, and accordingly our training must prepare individuals to face a novelty of conditions."[1] In other words, as the time-span of major cultural change has become shorter than the life-span of the individual, it becomes necessary to redefine education as a process of continuing inquiry. The role of the teacher must shift from that of transmitter of information to facilitator and resource to self-directed inquiry, and to regard education as a lifelong process. For knowledge gained at any point of time will become increasingly obsolete in the course of time.

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Two generations after this insight was presented, the schools around the world largely remain tied to the subject-matter transmittal framework of the medieval trivium and quadrivium (with some elaboration and the addition of vocational subjects). Accordingly, the educational establishment has come under increasing criticism from such social analysts as Saul Alinsky, Philippe Aries, Jerome Brunner, Jerry Farber, Paulo Freire, Paul Goodman, John Holt, Torsten Husen, Sidney Jourard, Ivan Illich, Rene Maheu, Margaret Mead, Jean Piaget, Neil Postman, Everett Reimer, Carl Rogers, Charles Silberman, Harold Taylor, and Alvin Toffler. The heart of much of the criticism is that the schools are out of touch with the reality of both human nature and the nature of a changing world. And one of the crucial new realities is that education must be lifelong to avoid the catastrophe of human obsolescence.

Clearly, therefore, new models of education as a lifelong process must be developed. I present the skeleton of such a model below in the hope that others will join me in strengthening it and putting flesh on it. The model consists of several assumptions and elements.

Competency Development for Life Roles

The first assumption is that the purpose of education is the development of competencies for performing the various roles required in human life. The first element in a new model would, therefore, be a taxonomy of these roles and their required competencies. Here is the beginning of such a taxonomy:

Roles	Competencies
Learner	Reading, writing, computing, perceiving, conceptualizing, evaluating, imagining, inquiring
Being a self (with unique self-identity)	Self-analyzing, sensing, goal-building, objectivising, value-clarifying, expressing
Friend	Loving, empathizing, listening, collaborating, sharing, helping, giving feedback, supporting
Citizen	Caring, participating, leading, decision-making, acting, "conscientizing," discussing, having perspective (historical and cultural)
Family member	Maintaining health, planning, managing, helping, sharing, buying, saving, loving, taking responsibility
Worker	Career planning, technical skills, using supervision, giving supervision, getting along with people, cooperating, planning, delegating, managing
Leisure-time user	Knowing resources, appreciating the arts and humanities, performing, playing, relaxing, reflecting, planing, risking

Obviously this list is not exhaustive; it is intended merely to illustrate some kinds of potential candidates for a taxonomic system.

Development of Skills of Learning

The second assumption is that the primary purpose of schooling is to help children and youth learn the skills of learning. The ultimate behavioral objective of schooling would be: "The individual engages efficiently in collaborative self-directed

inquiry in self-actualizing directions." I believe that these skills of learning include at least the following:

1. The ability to develop and be in touch with curiosities. Perhaps another way of describing this skill would be "the ability to engage in divergent thinking."

2. The ability to formulate questions, based on one's curiosities, that are answerable through inquiry (in contrast to questions that are answerable by authority or faith). This skill is the beginning of the ability to engage in convergent thinking or inductive-deductive reasoning.

3. The ability to identify the data required to answer the various kinds of questions.

4. The ability to locate the most relevant and reliable sources of the required data (including experts, teachers, colleagues, one's own experience, the various audio-visual media, and the community).

5. The ability to select and use the most efficient means for collecting the required data from the appropriate sources.

6. The ability to organize, analyze, and evaluate the data so as to get valid answers to questions.

7. The ability to generalize, apply, and communicate the answers to the questions raised.

The Development of a Spiral of "Learning Projects"

The third assumption is that the curriculum of organized education will most effectively achieve the objective of school ing if it is organized according to a spiraling series of in-

dividual learning projects,[2] with the understanding that several individuals with similar learning needs might engage in a learning project collaboratively. Under this assumption I visualize that the school would be presented to learners as a "learning resource center" and that teachers would be presented as "learning project consultants."

In brief, the curricular process would work something like this:

Each individual's learning project spiral would proceed according to his maturational process.[3]

At each developmental stage (to be determined by diagnostic procedures) the learning project consultant would expose the learner to appropriate role competency models. For example, for early learners these might include the beginning competencies of the roles of learner, friend, family member, and leisure-time user. These roles might well be the focus for the next several years, with increasingly complex competencies being presented. In early adolescence the emphasis would gradually shift to the roles of unique self, citizen, and worker.

Following each exposure to a role competency model the learner would select a set of competencies for which learning projects would then be developed with the help of learning project consultants and other relevant resource specialists. Emphasis would be placed on the learner's making use of learning resources increasingly proactively and in widening circles out into the community.

At the completion of each learning project the consultant would engage with the learner in an analysis of the experience in a variety of dimensions, including cognitive gains, learning skill gains, affective gains (and losses), and diagnosis of further needs.

I visualize that the learner would be gradually weaned away from the perception that he is engaged in schooling, and that when he has acquired the skills of learning appropriate to his aspirations he will come to see himself as a self-directed learner, making use of the learning resources center as a resource that is available to him on his terms for the rest of his life. There will be no such thing as graduation. There will be no such thing as adult education. There will only be lifelong education.

Boston, Massachusetts
August, 1972

NOTES

[1]Alfred N. Whitehead, "Introduction," Wallace B. Donham, Business Adrift (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1931), pp. viii-xix.

[2]For an elaboration on the concept of learning projects, see Allen Tough, The Adult's Learning Projects (Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1971), pp. 6-15.

[3]For fuller treatment of my concept of "Dimensions of Maturation," see Malcolm S. Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy versus Pedagogy (New York: Association Press, 1970), pp. 25-29.

LIFE PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN ADULTS

Malcolm S. Knowles, Boston University

Early Adulthood	Vocation and Career	Home and Family Living	Personal Development
(18 to 30)	Exploring career options	Courting	Improving your reading ability
	Choosing a career line	Selecting a mate	Improving your writing ability
	Getting a job	Preparing for marriage	Improving your speaking ability
	Being interviewed	Family planning	Improving your listening ability
	Learning job skills	Preparing for children	Continuing your general education
	Getting along at work	Raising children	Developing your religious faith
	Getting ahead at work	Understanding children	Improving problem-solving skills
	Getting job protection	Preparing children for school	Making better decisions
	Dealing with the issue of military service	Helping children in school	Getting along with people
	Getting vocational counseling	Solving marital problems	Understanding yourself
	Changing jobs	Using family counseling	Finding your self-identity
		Managing a home	Discovering your aptitudes
		Financial planning	Clarifying your values
		Managing money	Understanding other people
		Buying goods and services	Learning to be self-directing
		Making home repairs	Improving personal appearance
		Gardening	Establishing intimate relations
			Dealing with conflict
			Making use of personal counseling
Middle Adulthood (30 to 65)	Learning advanced job skills	Helping teen-age children to become adults	Finding new interests
	Supervising others	Letting your children go	Keeping out of a rut
	Changing careers	Relating to one's spouse as a person	Compensating for physiological changes
	Dealing with unemployment	Adjusting to aging parents	Dealing with change
	Planning for retirement	Learning to cook for two	Developing emotional flexibility
	Making second careers for mothers	Planning for retirement	Learning to cope with crises
			Developing a realistic time perspective

Early Adulthood	Enjoyment of Leisure	Health	Community Living
	Choosing hobbies Finding new friends Joining organizations Planning your time Buying equipment Planning family recreation Leading recreational activities	Keeping fit Planning diets Finding and using health services Preventing accidents Using first aid Understanding children's diseases Understanding how the human body functions Buying and using drugs and medicines Developing a healthy life style Recognizing the symptoms of physical and mental illness	Relating to school and teachers Learning about community resources Learning how to get help Learning how to exert influence Preparing to vote Developing leadership skills Keeping up with the world Taking action in the community Organizing community activities for children and youth
Middle Adulthood	Finding less active hobbies Broadening your cultural interests Learning new recreational skills Finding new friends Joining new organizations Planning recreation for two	Adjusting to physiological changes Changing diets Controling weight Getting exercise Having annual medical exams Compensating for losses in strength	Taking more social responsibility Taking leadership roles in organizations Working for the welfare of others Engaging in politics Organizing community improvement activities

Later Adulthood	Vocation and Career	Home and Family Living	Personal Development
(65 and over)	Adjusting to retirement Finding new ways to be useful Understanding social security, medicare, and welfare	Adjusting to reduced income Establishing new living arrangements Adjusting to death of spouse Learning to live alone Relating to grand children Establishing new intimate relationships Putting your estate in order	Developing compensatory abilities Understanding the aging process Re-examining your values Keeping future-oriented Kepping up your morale Keeping up to date Keeping in touch with young people Keeping curious Keeping up personal appearance Keeping an open mind Finding a new self-identity Developing a new time perspective Preparing for death

Later Adulthood	Enjoyment of Leisure	Health	Community Living
	Establishing affiliations with the older age group Finding new hobbies Learning new recreational skills Planning a balanced recreational program	Adjusting to decreasing strength and health Keeping fit Changing your diet Having regular medical exams Getting appropriate exercise Using drugs and medicines wisely Learning to deal with stress Maintaining your reserves	Working for improved conditions for the elderly Giving volunteer services Maintaining organizational ties

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